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PRC/NARCOTICS: "ICE" FOR SALE

Hong Kong drug enforcement efforts recently contributed to several unprecedented seizures of crystal methamphetamine or "ice" produced in China, according to Consulate General Hong Kong. A recent Royal Hong Kong Police (RHKP) investigation led to the seizure in Japan of 40 kilograms of "ice" produced in a secret lab in Guangzhou, reportedly capable of producing 200 kilograms of the drug per month. The RHKP believes additional drug labs are operating in Shanghai and possibly Beijing.

Comment: Press reports have cited cross-border "ice" trafficking between China and Hong Kong, but this is the first specific mention of a major lab operating in China. While the seized Chinese drugs were apparently bound for the Philippines and Japan—traditional markets for the drug—"ice" has gained popularity in the United States and has become the dominant illegal drug in Hawaii. "Ice" is a powerful stimulant reportedly more addictive than crack cocaine.

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

IS/FPC/CDR

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5/23/94

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